

The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

ER 1781-88

April 28, 1988

Mr. Robert Timberg
 The Baltimore Sun
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Dear Bob:

I finally got around to reading the Jim Fallows' article you sent me from the Washington Monthly, "What Did You Do in the Class War, Daddy?". You may be amused to know that I was two-thirds of the way through the article before I realized that it was written more than a dozen years ago.

I found it a very insightful, self-revealing and thought-provoking piece. By the same token, it brought out my historian's instincts. For example, while World War II may be an exception, I wonder if a similar article could have been written in 1866 or in 1919 about the class status of those who had served and those who did not. I wonder about the degree to which the level of popular support for a war correlates with broad participation across lines of class and wealth (e.g., WWII).

And in that respect, it seems to me that Fallows' article ties in directly to Stockdale's speech on "Our Personal and National Resolve." To what degree do America's own leaders establish the pre-conditions for the kind of class phenomenon described by Fallows when they involve the country in a controversial conflict, or one in which the purposes are unclear, or one in which the strategy is muddled, or one in which chicanery is used as a means to shoehorn a nation into the conflict. And do the more politically astute or informed simply better grasp these problems of leadership and strategy, and act accordingly?

The articles individually are quite interesting. But I wish I had the time to pursue the historical and philosophical connections in the articles taken together. I envy you your opportunity to take on even a part of that challenge.

It was good to see you at the White House Correspondents dinner. Stay in touch.

Regards,

Robert M. Gates

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Washington Bureau

March 28, 1988

Return to me

Dear Bob--

Enjoyed seeing you at the Gridiron. Kind of a strange institution but a charming one, I think. Thought Cuomo's remarks about Reagan were especially gracious and touching. Assume you and Senator Cohen had a pleasant chat. Figured things had been smoothed over since the unpleasantness of early '87, but you never know so I split.

Enclosed are a couple of pieces I mentioned to you Saturday night. The Fallows article, written in 1975, strikes me as perceptive and illuminating. Forgot until after we separated that you were at the NSC when he was writing speeches for Carter. Admiral Stockdale's speech is both trenchant and passionate, especially at the top of the last page.

In my book, I hope to explore that generational faultline created by Vietnam (Fallows argues, pretty persuasively, I think, that social class played a major role). But I also plan to look into its corrosive effect on our national resolve, perhaps the state of our integrity as a nation. The key to doing so successfully, though, is not to rub the reader's nose in the theme, but to bring it alive through the personalities and experiences and actions of the central figures. For the moment, I find myself both excited and intimidated by the project. But I know if I just hold it together for awhile, sheer panic will set in, I'll feel right at home and get the damned thing done.

Thanks for giving me a copy of the speech you gave in Dallas. I was particularly taken by the section on glasnost and the potential problems even a minimally successful Gorbachev could create for the United States. I passed on copies to Steve Broening, our diplomatic correspondent, and Frank Starr, our bureau chief. Both are old Moscow hands. Didn't think you'd have any objection.

Thanks again for lunch. Hope to see you soon. If you're at the White House Correspondents dinner, please stop by our reception. No Fawn Hall this year, but our guests include Holly Hunter and Donna Rice.

Best regards,

Bob Timberlake

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 A Times Mirror
Newspaper

What Did You Do the Class War, Daddy?



by James Fallows

Many people think that the worst scars of the war years have healed. I don't. Vietnam has left us with a heritage rich in possibilities for class warfare, and I would like to start telling about it with this story:

In the fall of 1969, I was beginning my final year in college. As the months went by, the rock on which I had unthinkingly anchored my hopes—the certainty that the war in Vietnam would be over before I could possibly fight—began to crumble. It shattered altogether on Thanksgiving weekend when, while riding back to Boston from a visit with my relatives, I heard that the draft lottery had been held and my birthdate had come up number 45. I recognized for the first time that, inflexibly, I must either be drafted or consciously find a way to prevent it.

In the atmosphere of that time,

James Fallows is a contributing editor of The Washington Monthly.

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each possible choice came equipped with barbs. To answer the call was unthinkable, not only because, in my heart, I was desperately afraid of being killed, but also because, among my friends, it was axiomatic that one should not be "complicit" in the immoral war effort. Draft resistance, the course chosen by a few noble heroes of the movement, meant going to prison or leaving the country. With much the same intensity with which I wanted to stay alive, I did not want those things either. What I wanted was to go to graduate school, to get married, and to enjoy those bright prospects I had been taught that life owed me.

I learned quickly enough that there was only one way to get what I wanted. A physical deferment would restore things to the happy state I had known during four undergraduate years. The barbed alternatives would

James Bond Stockdale

speaks on

**Our Personal
and National Resolve**

to the

American Society of Newspaper Editors
San Francisco, California

April 8, 1987